

P21475.A18

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appellant : K. AYUKAWA et al.

Group Art Unit: 3682

Appl No. : 09/961,365

Examiner: M. CHARLES

Filed : September 25, 2001

Confirmation No. 5941

For : THIN AUTOTENSIONER

**REPLY BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.41**

Commissioner for Patents  
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
Customer Service Window, Mail Stop AMENDMENT  
Randolph Building  
401 Dulany Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Sir:

In response to the Examiner's Answer, dated November 15, 2006, to the Appeal Brief filed November 8, 2004, Appellants submit the present Reply Brief.

Appellants maintain that each reason set forth in the Appeal Brief filed November 8, 2004 and in the Reply Brief filed March 28, 2005 for the patentability of the pending claims is correct and again respectfully request that the decision of the Examiner to finally reject claims 1-4 and 6 be reversed and that the application be returned to the Examining Group for allowance. However, if any extension of time is necessary, this is an express request for any necessary extension of time and authorization to charge any required extension of time fee or any other fees which may be required to preserve the pendency of the present application to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

REMARKS

Appellants note that the Examiner's Answer dated November 15, 2006 has been drafted according to the rule 37 C.F.R. § 41.37 standards. Further, we note that in the Examiner's Answer dated November 15, 2006, the Examiner has maintained all outstanding rejections for the same reasons set forth in the Examiner's Answer dated September 21, 2005. It appears that the Examiner's Answer dated November 15, 2006 and the Examiner's Answer dated September 21, 2005 differ only in that the Examiner's Answer dated November 15, 2006 has been drafted according to the new rule 37 C.F.R. § 41.37.

Accordingly, while no response is deemed necessary, the Examiner's Answer dated November 15, 2006 is hereby noted.

Appellants again submit that the applied art of record fails to disclose or suggest the unique combination of features recited in Appellants' claims 1-4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Accordingly, Appellants respectfully request that the Board reverse the decision of the Examiner to reject claims 1-4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and remand the application to the Examiner for allowance.

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Thus, Appellants respectfully submit that each and every pending claim of the present application meets the requirement for patentability under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and that the present application and each pending claim are allowable over the prior art of record.

Respectfully submitted,  
K. AYUKAWA et al.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda J. Hodge".

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Reg. No. 29,027

Linda J. Hodge  
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January 3, 2007  
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